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ABSTRACT

The Teachers Achieving Success with Kids (TASK) mentorship program was designed to improve the attendance, discipline, academic achievement and attitudes of at-risk students attending an urban middle school. In order to develop positive relationships, 25 teacher-student pairs met each day away from the classroom setting and engaged in one hour weekly sessions. Weekly progress reports were completed by teachers which evaluated the student's attendance, discipline and academic progress. Teachers and TASK coordinators met bi-weekly. An attitudinal survey was completed by the target group before and after the program. Results indicated that there had been a significant improvement in attendance, discipline and academic achievement among the targeted population, as well as a positive change in attitudes about school. It was concluded that the teacher-student relationship had a profound affect on the student performance and attitudes about school. TASK principles could be applied to any school where the need for teacher student mentorships exist from elementary school through high school. Appendices include the student and teacher survey instruments, and analyses of attendance, discipline, academic achievement, and attitudinal changes among the target population. (Author/BHK)

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TEACHERS ACHIEVING SUCCESS WITH KIDS (TASK)
A Teacher-Student Mentorship Program for At-Risk Students

by

Lois Abcug

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A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education at Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

April 1991

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Abstract

Teachers Achieving Success With Kids (TASK): A Teacher-Student Mentorship Program for At-Risk Students.
Abcug, Lois M., 1991: Practicum Report, Nova University, The Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: Teacher Student Relationship/ High Risk Students/ Dropout Prevention/ Student Alienation/

A teacher-student mentorship program was implemented to improve attendance, discipline, academic achievement and attitudes about school among at-risk students at an urban middle school. Twenty-five sixth, seventh, and eighth grade at-risk students were matched with teacher volunteers. Teacher- student pairs met daily, away from the classroom setting, in order to develop strong, positive teacher student relationships. An attitudinal survey was also completed by the target group before and after the program. The results indicated a significant improvement in attendance, discipline and academic achievement among the targeted population, as well as a positive change in attitudes about school. It was concluded that the teacher-student relationship has a profound affect on student performance and attitudes about school. TASK principles can be applied at any school where the need for teacher student mentorships exist, from elementary school through high school. Appendices include analyses of attendance, discipline, academic achievement and attitudinal changes among the target population.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed: Ian Gray

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

Background

This practicum project was conducted in a public middle school with a student population of 770. The ethnic breakdown is approximately 55 percent black, 32 percent white and 13 percent Hispanic. The community immediately surrounding the school is in transition. It was predominantly white collar, with a middle-to-high socio-economic level. It is becoming more blue collar, with a lower-to-middle socio-economic level. About 75 percent of the student population is bused to school from poorer neighborhoods, and 587 students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. As a result of this high percentage of students from a lower socio-economic level, the school is eligible for several federally and state financed programs.

Approximately half of the student population has been identified as being at risk. These students are involved in dropout prevention programs and other classes specifically designed for at-risk students. This writer has been a team leader, student activities sponsor and a classroom teacher at

this middle school for the past several years. It is from this direct and varied experience within the school that perspective has been gained as to the correlation between academic success and teacher-student relationships among at-risk students. Students are required to attend school. Their behavior and success there to some extent depends upon the relationships they develop with their teachers.

For the purpose of this practicum, teachers were trained to be mentors to at-risk students. They were matched with 25 sixth, seventh and eighth grade students and met regularly with those students to develop a relationship with them outside of the classroom. Attention was focused on the effect this mentorship program had upon student attendance, discipline and academic success.

Problem Statement

This teacher/student mentorship practicum project was designed to meet the needs of at-risk sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. The school district has developed flexible guidelines to be used to help identify these children. They are performing at least two years years below grade level; they are eligible for financial assistance; they

have been retained at least one grade; they are not encouraged by their families to be successful in school. Half of the student population of this specific middle school have been identified as potential dropouts. Current research literature suggests that potential dropouts share common characteristics. They tend to come from a low socio-economic background and do not find support at home for their education. They often have below grade level academic and reading ability and perceive school as a hostile place to be. They feel alienated and disconnected from the goals set by the school. They have found only continued failure and frustration in their school experience, so that school was a punishing environment to be escaped at the first opportunity. According to a recent study, "Seen through their eyes, school is inflexible, unresponsive,and unconcerned about individual needs." (Rhodes and McMillan, 1987). This profile of at-risk students is applicable to those who attend the middle school described in this study.

At-risk students also tend to lack problem solving skills. They often are not able to see the cause and effect relationship between the actions they take and the consequences of those actions. They feel powerless and removed from the consequences of their actions and thus, have

difficulty in making choices. They lack decision making skills and often blame others for the consequences of their own actions.

Alienation and lack of student involvement is evident at the targeted middle school. This feeling of disconnection is manifested in student attendance rates, academic progress and discipline problems. The daily attendance rate is only about 70%. It should be approximately 90%. About 80 discipline referrals are turned in to administrators weekly. This number should be reduced to below 40. The median grade point average is below 1.5. It should be at least 2.0.

Outcome Objectives

The TASK (Teachers Achieving Success with Kids) mentorship program was implemented over a period of 12 weeks. It was expected that the students in the target group would improve their daily attendance rate by 20%; they would raise their median grade point average to 2.0; and they would be responsible for a 50% decrease in the number of discipline referrals turned in to adminstrators weekly. It was also expected that students in the target group would develop problem solving and decision making skills, and would develop a positive attitude about school.

Based upon the expressed needs and interests of the school´s administrators, faculty and staff, the desired minimum outcomes of the project were pursued in two consecutive phases over a twelve-week period and include the following:

During the initial two-week preparatory period, volunteer teachers were matched with at-risk students and were trained to be mentors. This included training in teaching critical thinking skills since at-risk students tend to lack decision making and problem solving skills.

Over the period of the subsequent 10 weeks teachers and students met daily to develop a close mentorship relationship outside of the classroom.

The daily student attendance rate among those students who took part in the study was expected to increase by 20% as measured by a comparison of daily attendance records which were tabulated before and after the implementation period.

Records were studied to determine how many of the 80 weekly discipline referrals concerned the students taking part in the TASK program. One TASK objective was to reduce that number by 50% as measured by a comparison of the number of referrals handed in to administrators before and after the implementation period.

Another TASK objective was to raise the median grade point average of participants to 2.0 by the end of the implementation period.

Student attendance, discipline and academic progress are measurable manifestations of student attitudes. Another purpose of TASK was to help students develop critical thinking skills, specifically decision making and problem solving techniques. The teaching of critical thinking skills was evaluated through the TASK coordinator´s observation of volunteer teachers. Mastery of critical thinking skills was evaluated through teacher observation of student behavior. Finally, the TASK program was an attempt to change the way students feel about school. In order to measure this change in attitude, both students and teachers completed a questionnaire before and after taking part in the program.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

Nationally, one out of four students entering eighth grade will drop out of school before graduation. In the inner cities this ratio is one out of two. Dropout rates for Native American, Hispanic and Black students range from 35 to 85 percent. In 1985 businesses spent $40 million to teach remedial reading, writing, and math. American citizens pay more that $75 billion a year in unemployment, welfare and other costs for dropouts and their families. (Rhodes and McMillan, 1987:34). This tragedy threatens to undermine the economic health of our country and its future.

There is no one reason for students dropping out of school. The causes are multiple and interactive. They can be classified as environmental, academic, economic and social. They combine and their overwhelming influence will cause the at-risk student to drop out of school. (Rhodes and McMillan, 1987:35).

The teacher-student relationship has been widely documented as having a direct and beneficial influence on student achievement in school. It is one solution to the dropout problem. (Rhodes, 1987; Rhodes and McMillan, 1987;

Self, 1985; Cuban, 1989). In a review of the literature concerning dropout prevention programs, Timothy Self describes the teacher-student relationship as the most important and simplest intervention strategy. According to Self, when dropouts from New York schools were interviewed, 61 percent said that they felt unwanted and defined good teachers as caring and seeing students as individuals. (1985:30).

As far back as 1969 William Glasser suggested that "at least half of all students are making little or no effort to learn because they don't believe that school satisfies their needs." (1969:16). He attributed student alienation to the failure-orientation of our schools. As Glasser explained:

> All our lives, we search for ways to satisfy our needs for love, belonging, caring, sharing and cooperation. If a student feels no sense of belonging in school, no sense of being involved in caring and concern, that child will pay little attention to academic subjects. Instead, he or she will engage in a desperate search for friendship, for acceptance. The child may become a behavioral problem, in the hope of attracting attention. (1968:17).

William Purkey seems to agree. He defines the teacher as an inviter and describes good teaching as "the process of inviting students to see themselves as able, valuable, and self-directing and of encouraging them to act in accordance with these self-perceptions." (1984:7).

Both Glasser and Purkey point to alienation and lack of involvement as the major causes of behavioral disturbances and educational failures in school. Educators have demonstrated that programs can be developed to increase student involvement and alleviate our nation's dropout problem. Successful programs involve flexibility in grouping and methodology, and teachers who strive to develop a caring relationship with each high risk student. Larry Cuban describes a successful dropout prevention program as "a model of a community, an extended family where achievement is important and so is caring for one another. Building a sense of belonging to a group -- in effect, a supportive environment --- is consciously sought as a means of increasing self-esteem and achievement." (Cuban, 1989:31).

In 1985 the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education created Operation Rescue in order to gather information and evaluate ongoing dropout prevention programs. The NFIE concluded that all successful dropout prevention programs are based on the same set of principles and visions and these include:

1. Those who work with at-risk students must genuinely believe that they can make a difference, and this belief must be conveyed to the students.

2. Teachers must develop one-to-one relationships with students and reach out to parents.
3. When students develop a sense of ownership and feel empowered they will not drop out. (Rhodes, 1987: 5-6).

Several recent studies address the problem of motivation for at-risk students. Carol Dweck describes adaptive and maladaptive motivational patterns that influence a child's acquisition, transfer and use of knowledge and skills. Dweck argues that a child's self-concept will affect his development of both cognitive and social skills. (Dweck, 1986:1046).

M. Kay Alderman's Links-To-Success Model emphasizes the causal relationship between the student's actions and the outcome. According to Alderman the "helpless" student feels powerless in preventing failure or assuring success. For this student simply experiencing success is not enough to ensure motivation. The teacher's goals should be first to help the at-risk student set goals and attain the skills necessary to reach those goals. Then the teacher should encourage the student to link success or failure to his personal effort or ability. Alderman goes on to explain, "When we help students

take responsibility for their learning, we have taken a giant step in promoting motivational equality in the classroom." (Alderman, 1990:29).

Alderman´s conclusions were confirmed by a study designed to teach learning disabled junior high school students how to set realistic achievement goals, to expend effort to reach the goals and to accept personal responsibility for achievement outcomes. The results reinforce the link between students´ expectations and actual performance. (Tollefson, 1984).

Sandra Parks Black, a leader in thinking skills instruction and the director of Thinking Works in St. Augustine, Florida states that all students, including at-risk students can learn and benefit from thinking skills instruction. At-risk students, in particular, benefit from instruction in analysis skills, creative thinking skills and decision making strategies. Analysis skills make the learning of content more efficient and can be taught effectively by the infusion method, that is, by being incorporated into the curriculum in each academic area. Creative thinking is desirable because it is highly motivating and at-risk students tend to be reluctant learners. Decision making

involves using creative and critical thinking in making choices. These strategies can be taught by infusion or in isolated lessons. According to Black, "decision making strategies increase students' confidence in their own ability to think through the choices they face. They gain a better sense of their options, possible consequences, and likelihood of outcomes." (Black, 1990:4)

Alderman's, Tollefson's and Black's conclusions were confirmed by a study conducted by Barbara Presseisen. The results of this study indicate that at-risk students need instruction in critical thinking skills. Presseisen concludes that teaching thinking involves not only learning cognitive skills such as analysis, classification, and evaluation, but also becoming conscious of the strategies that are appropriate to a particular task. She focuses on the role of the teacher as a mediator of learning and encourages the development of instructional materials and programs to teach thinking skills to at-risk students. (1987:66-72).

Decision making strategies can be taught with the use of the Cognitive Research Trust (CoRT) system, a thinking skills program developed by Edward de Bono. (De Bono, 1986). The lessons described in CoRT can be used with cooperative learning groups or with individual students. The second

method would be more appropriate for this mentorship project. A student meeting with his mentor would use situations provided by CoRT and list or discuss plus, minus and interesting (PMI) solutions to the problem. For example, what if all children could drop out of school at the age of 11? The student and mentor would both list and discuss positive, negative and interesting results of that situation. Another of the CoRT strategies is to consider all factors (CAF) before reaching a decision. For example, how could a teenager decide what car to buy when he gets his driver´s license? Again the student and mentor would collaborate to list and discuss all the factors to consider before making a decision. Students would then apply the same skills to make decisions and solve real-life problems.

In a survey conducted by Millicent Poole, 1,596 adolescents were asked what type of school they would like to attend. (Poole, 1984:452-453). A significant number wanted more informal relations with their teachers and the teacher-student relationship was found to be a significant factor in the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the students. In a similar study conducted by John Buckner and Frank Bickel 394 middle school students were asked to rank personal and

professional qualities of excellent teachers. The students described excellent teachers as those who "are willing to listen, are respectful toward students, accept students, are easy to talk with, demonstrate warmth and kindness, and are friendly." (Buckner and Bickel, 1991:26-29). The researchers concluded that teachers should analyze their own classroom behavior to determine how they would be ranked by their students. Hopefully, this analysis would increase their understanding of the students they serve while improving their own instructional effectiveness.

A mentor relationship between an adult and a child is not necessarily limited to school programs. The Big Brothers/Big Sisters service organization is based on the concept that a child, in order to grow into a responsible adult, needs a positive relationship with a mature adult figure. Children in need are matched with concerned, responsible volunteers who serve as a friend and role model to them. The Big Brother/Big Sister organization provided the framework for the TASK project.

The TASK program was based on developing a one-to-one caring relationship between teacher volunteers and students

who have a history of being unmotivated and uninterested in school. Faculty volunteers, instructional team leaders, counselors and administrators all collaborated to generate a list of students who would benefit from the program. During the first phase of the program teachers were given inservice training provided by the program coordinator of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization. The TASK program coordinator also provided inservice training in the use of Edward de Bono´s CoRT critical thinking system. Then teachers were matched with those selected students who chose to take part in the program. Teacher volunteers were given their student friend´s schedule as well as recent attendance, academic and discipline history. Matched students and teachers were introduced and initial questionnaires were completed before the second phase of the project was implemented. During the second phase of the TASK project teachers and students met for a few minutes daily and for at least one longer period of time weekly to establish a mentor relationship. Teacher volunters also met regularly with the TASK coordinator to evaluate progress, make necessary adjustments in the program, and address individual concerns. When the implementation phase was completed, matched students

and teachers again filled out the questionnnaire to determine if attitudes about school and expectations of success were changed by the TASK project. Finally, statistics were analyzed to determine the effect of the TASK project on student attendance, behavior and academic achievement.

CHAPTER III

Method

The TASK mentorship program was composed of two consecutive phases. Phase One was completed in two weeks, while Phase Two stretched over a ten week period. (Appendix A, 31-32).

Phase One

Prior to the commencement of TASK, this researcher collaborated with 25 faculty volunteers, instructional team leaders, counselors and administrators to generate a list of students who would benefit from the mentorship program. (Appendix B, 33). Students were asked if they would like to participate in a program like Big Brother/Big Sister with a paired teacher. Twenty-five willing sixth, seventh and eighth grade students were selected to take part in the project along with 25 teacher volunteers. During the first week teacher volunteers stayed after school for a two hour training program. The program coordinator of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters service organization explained how to promote a trusting relationship with a student outside of the classroom. During the second week the teacher volunteers

stayed after school again for another training session. This time the TASK project coordinator provided inservice training in the CoRT system for teaching critical thinking skills. Teachers learned how to use CoRT to help students develop problem solving and decision making skills. Each teacher volunteer was then matched with one of the students who chose to take part in the program. Teacher volunteers were given their student friend's schedule as well as recent attendance, academic and discipline history. This researcher also distributed a list of suggested activities in which matched teachers and students may choose to participate during the second phase of the project. (Appendix C, 34)

Phase Two

A TASK breakfast marked the commencement of Phase Two. (Appendix D, 35). Matched teachers and students were introduced to each other. Each student and teacher completed a questionnaire at this session (Appendix E, 36 and Appendix F, 37) and the specific procedures of the program were discussed. TASK activities were broken down into four categories:

1. Daily greetings
2. Weekly one hour sessions

3. Weekly progress reports
4. Bi-weekly meetings with all teacher volunteers and the TASK coordinator.

Phase Two of TASK can be further broken down into weekly events:

Week 1

Matched teacher-student pairs (T-S) were introduced and completed the TASK questionnaire. They greeted each other each day and spent one hour together during the week before or after school. At the end of the week each teacher volunteer (TV) completed a progress report describing the student´s attendance, discipline and academic progress for the week and explaining how they spent their time together. (Appendix G, 38).

Week 2

Again T-S pairs greeted each other daily, spent a one hour session together and the TV completed a progress report for the week. On Thursday all TVs met with the TASK coordinator to share ideas and experiences. Two TVs decided to go to the mall together over the weekend with their matched student friends if they agreed.

Week 3

T-S pairs greeted each other daily, spent a one hour

session together and the TV completed a progress report for the week. One student in the target group was transferred to another school and a replacement was arranged.

Week 4

This week followed the same format as Week 2. During the week T-S pairs discussed ideas for a group outing. At the Thursday TV meeting it was decided that all T-S pairs would stay after school the following week for a school basketball game and pizza dinner. TVs also noted that they are forming genuine friendships with their matched student.

Week 5

T-S pairs greeted each other daily and each TV completed a weekly progress report. All TASK participants and the TASK coordinator attended a school basketball game and had dinner together after the game.

Week 6

This week followed the same format as Week 2. At the TV meeting teachers discussed how they are helping students to make responsible decisions and cope with peer pressure. Ideas for teaching problem solving skills were shared.

Week 7

T-S pairs greeted each other daily, spent a one hour session together and each TV completed a weekly progress

report. The progress reports indicated that several TVs met with teachers to find out what academic help they could provide for their matched student. According to the progress reports, 14 TVs tutored their matched student for at least half of the one hour session this week.

Week 8

This week followed the same format as Week 2. At the TV meeting teachers discussed the impact the T-S pairs are having on each other´s lives. They discussed the problems the students face at home and how the students reacted to their matched teacher´s family life. Eight teachers invited their matched student to their home for dinner or Saturday lunch and a movie. They also discussed ideas for a final group session: a pot-luck dinner prepared by the T-S pairs.

Week 9

T-S pairs greeted each other daily, spent a one hour session together and each TV completed a weekly progress report. During the week T-S pairs also discussed plans for a final TASK group dinner.

Week 10

T-S pairs greeted each other daily and each TV completed a weeekly progress report. On Thursday all TASK participants

stayed after school for our pot-luck dinner, prepared by the T-S pairs. All participants completed the TASK questionnaire and had an opportunity to share the best and worst of TASK.

Each week during Phase 2 the TASk coordinator collected data, analyzed results, and made whatever adjustments were necessary to keep the TASK program moving smoothly. For example, when a student withdrew from the school, another student was chosen for the target group. School records pertaining to daily attendance rates and discipline referrals were collected and analyzed. Weekly progress reports were studied to determine how T-S pairs were spending their time together. Conferences were held with TVs to review methods for teaching critical thinking skills. The TASK coordinator also observed T-S pairs working together in order to evaluate the merits of TASK.

CHAPTER IV

Evaluation

The purpose of TASK was to improve attendance, reduce the number of discipline referrals, raise academic grades and to help students develop higher level thinking skills. Teacher-student pairs wer observed and records were examined for the target population of 25 students before, during and after the implementation of the TASK project.

Before the implementation of TASK, the daily attendance rate for the target group was only about 70%. It was expected that the daily attendance rate would improve by 20%. According to school attendance records, the rate did improve approximately 18%. (Appendix H, 39). It was also noted that 14 of the targeted students were consistently tardy to school before the implementation of TASK, and 11 of those students were consistently on time once TASK was implemented.

All of the students who participated in the TASK project have a history of discipline problems in school. It was anticipated that these students would be responsible for a 50% decrease in the number of discipline referrals turned in to administrators weekly as a result of the TASK program. In fact, the number of weekly discipline referrals did drop over 35%. This decline developed gradually and only became

apparent after the TASK project was in its fifth week. (Appendix I, 40).

The median grade point average of the targeted population was below 1.5 before the implementation of the TASK mentorship program. It was expected that the median grade point average of those students would be raised to 2.0. By comparing the students´ report card for the first and second grading period, it was concluded that the median grade point average of the target population improved significantly. At the completion of five weeks of the TASK program, the median grade point average of the target population was over 2.75. (Appendix J, 41).

TASK is based on the hypothesis that there is a correlation between student performance (as measured by attendance, discipline and academic achievement) and students´ attitudes about school. The purpose of TASk was to promote a close teacher-student relationship in order to change students´ attitudes about school. In order to measure this change in attitude, both students and teachers completed a questionnaire before and after taking part in the program. It was interesting to note that the students´ answers were generally consistent. Twenty-two of the students planned to

graduate from high school before and after taking part in TASK, and 23 of the students consistently wished their grades were better. However, the number of students who agreed that the rules and discipline consequences at school are usually fair increased from nine to 16. The number of students who agreed with the statement, "Some of my teachers try hard to make school interesting" also increased from 14 to 23. Most dramatically, the number of students who disagreed with the statement, "My teachers really don't care about me" increased from eight to 25. (Appendix K, 42-43.)

As previously stated, teachers also completed the survey. Teachers' responses, like those of the students, tended to be consistent. All of the teacher volunteers expected that students would get into less trouble in school because of TASK. All of the teachers expected to make a difference in their student friends' life. After the implementation of TASK, 19 of the teachers agreed with the statement, "I would like to continue working with my student friend even when the program is over." Five teachers would rather work with another student. All of the teachers strongly agreed with the statement, "I genuinely care about my student friend." All of the teachers agreed that TASK is a

worthwhile project that should be repeated. However, they also agreed that "TASK takes up too much of my time." (Appendix L, 44-45).

The CoRT system of teaching critical thinking skills was used to enable students to develop problem solving and decision making strategies. Throughout the program the TASk coordinator observed teacher-student pairs and concluded that the teacher volunteers were using the CoRT system effectively, and that the studnets were developing higher order thinking skills.

The results of the TASK mentor project lead to several conclusions. First, the TASK project is responsible for improvement in attendance, discipline and academic achievement. Next, the teacher-student relationship developed through TASK led to a positive change in students´ attitudes about school. Finally, teachers are willing to volunteer their time and effort if they believe they can make a significant difference in a student´s life.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Research has shown that dropping out and student absenteeism is less prevalent in schools where the faculty is interested in and involved with students outside of the classroom (Bryk and Thum, 1989). The TASK project facilitates the development of a strong, positive teacher student relationship. Educators need to be aware of the strength of this relationship.

Immediate plans to apply the successful elements of the TASK project include an extension of the program. It can be repeated during this school year so that a total of 50 at-risk students will participate. Beyond that, it is expected that participants will act as promoters of TASK at the school so that other teachers and students will want to participate.

TASK is a flexible program. Its principles can be applied at any school where the need for teacher student mentorships exist, from elementary school through high school. This writer looks forward to sharing findings with other middle schools as well as administrators and counselors of elementary and high schools in the school district.

In a broader sense, the project may have implications for similar dropout prevention programs throughout the

country. Therefore, a condensed version may be subsequently submitted to such organizations as the National Education Association and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development for possible inclusion in their publications.

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Appendices

Appendix A
A Detailed Time-Line for TASK

Phase One

Week 1
1. Generate a list of teacher volunteers (TVs).
2. Generate a list of students targeted for the program.
3. Provide inservice training from Big Brother-Big Sister organization.

Week 2
1. Provide inservice training in CoRT.
2. Match each TV with a targeted student.
3. Provide TVs with targeted students' schedule and academic history.
4. Provide TVs with a list of suggested activities.

Phase Two

Week 1
1. Introduce matched teacher-student pairs (T-S) to each other.
2. All TASK participants will complete a TASK questionnaire.
3. Each T-S will meet for ten minutes daily
4. Each T-S will spend one hour together away from the classroom.
5. Each TV will complete a progress report.

Week 2
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2 One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report
4. All TVs will meet with the TASK project coordinator to share ideas and experiences.

Week 3
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report

Week 4
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report
4. TVs meet with TASK coordinator.

Week 5
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report
4. Group outing involving all TASK participants and the TASK coordinator.

Week 6
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report
4. TVs meet with TASK coordinator.

Week 7
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report

Week 8
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report
4. TVs meet with TASK coordinator.

Week 9
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report

Week 10
1. Ten minute T-S daily meeting
2. One hour T-S weekly meeting
3. TV progress report
4. TVs meet with TASK coordinator.
5. Group outing involving all TASK participants and the TASK coordinator.
6. All participants complete TASK questionnaire and meet to evaluate TASK project.

Appendix B
Teacher and Student Selection Survey

From: Lois Abcug
Re: TASK

Teachers Achieving Success with Kids (TASK)

The purpose of TASK is to improve attendance, reduce the number of discipline problems at our school, and help students achieve academic success. It cannot work without YOUR help.

Teacher Volunteers will be matched with students who need some special TLC. This program is modeled after Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Teachers will be expected to greet their student friend each day, and devote one planning period or one lunch period to that student each week. Become a student advocate. Show a student that someone at our school really cares about him. Teach him how to make responsible decisions.

We believe that having a teacher friend can really make a difference to a child who is just about to give up. Won´t you be that person?

Thanks

Lois Abcug

I would like to be a TASK volunteer .....

I would like to work with .....

I think these students would benefit from TASK;

Name.....Grade.....

Name.....Grade.....

Name.....Grade.....

Appendix C
TASK Activities

To: TASK Teachers
From: Lois Abcug
Re: T-S Activities

This is a list of suggested activities which you may chose to do with your student friend. Please do not limit yourself to the activities listed on this page. Use your imagination as well as the interests of your student friend to determine how you will spend your time together. This list is only to be used as a starting point. Let´s brainstorm to see how many other ways we can develop the TASK program.

On Campus:

tutoring, review homework
have breakfast, lunch
discuss TV; discuss a movie
talk about peer pressure
practice decision making skills (CoRT)
do housekeeping chores (clean closet, desk, organize papers)
practice hairdos and makeup
talk about resolving conflicts with parents, friends, teachers, etc.
talk about student achievements
role play: what if...
discuss school and team activities
plan birthday and holiday celebrations together

Off Campus

watch your student friend at sports practice or a game
spend an afternoon at the mall
have lunch together
invite your student friend to your home
visit the student´s home
enjoy a movie together
go to a park or a sporting event
plan the TASK pot luck dinner together
celebrate a birthday or holiday together
introduce your student friend to your family; meet his family

Remember, this list is only a starting point. Plan activities with your student friend. Keep your goal in mind. Make a difference in a student´s life. Show him that you care.

Appendix D

TASK Breakfast

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Let´s have breakfast TOGETHER!!!

Tuesday morning, December 11 at 7:30 in the Team Room

Be sure to invite your "adopted" student friend.

McDonald´s breakfast will be provided.

Cookies or doughnuts would be appreciated.

See you there!!!

Appendix E
Student Questionnaire

To: TASK Students
Re: Attitudes about school

This questionnaire has been prepared to learn how you feel about school. Please DO NOT sign your name so that your answers may remain CONFIDENTIAL. It is important that you answer each question as honestly as you can.

Thank you for your help!

Please circle the number which most closely corresponds to your opinion or feeling:

1=Strongly agree 2=Agree 3=Undecided

4=Disagree 5=Strongly disagree

1. I have made a lot of new friends this year.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The rules and discipline consequences at school are usually fair.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Nobody at home cares how I do in school.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Some of my teachers try hard to make school interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am planning to graduate from high school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Going to school is a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5
7 I like to go to school to see my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My teachers really don´t care about me.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I like being part of a team.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My teachers embarrass me and make me feel stupid.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I always ask my friends for advice before I make a decision.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My teachers are always picking on me.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I will probably drop out of school before high school graduation.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I wish my grades were better in school.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I´m satisfied with things just the way they are.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F
Teacher Questionnaire

To: TASK Teacher Volunteers
Re: Attitudes about TASK

This questionnaire has been prepared to learn how you feel about TASK. Please DO NOT sign your name so that your answers may remain CONFIDENTIAL. It is important that you answer each question as honestly as you can.

Thank you for your assistance!

Please circle the number which most closely corresponds to your opinion or feeling:

1=Strongly agree 2=Agree 3=Undecided

4=Disagree 5=Strongly disagree

1. I have very little influence on my student friend.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My student friend will probably get into less trouble in school because of TASK.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I think I can make a difference in my student friend's life.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I genuinely care about my student friend.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I really consider my paired student a friend.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Working with students outside the classroom requires special training.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Students drop out of school because they feel unsuccessful.	1	2	3	4	5
8. If I can make my student friend feel better about himself, he will probably stay in school.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I sincerely like being with my student friend, even though I am giving up my free time.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Every teacher should be paired with a student.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My student friend really does not belong in school.	1	2	3	4	5
12. TASK takes up too much of my time.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I would like to continue working with my student friend even when the program is over.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I would rather work with another student.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I think TASK is a worthwhile project and should be repeated.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix G

TASK Checklist

Student:

Teacher Volunteer:

Week:

Attendance:

Referrals:

Academic Progress:

Activity (include date and time):

Comments:

Appendix H

Attendance Results

TASK Students with Perfect Attendance

Week	Number of Students	Percent of Students
1	17	68
2	15	60
3	19	76
4	19	76
5	15	60
6	20	80
7	23	92
8	21	84
9	21	84
10	22	88

Appendix I

Discipline Referrals

Week	Total School	TASK Students
1	80	50
2	52	30
3	83	56
4	76	52
5	71	40
6	63	36
7	57	31
8	64	32
9	53	28
10	52	31
% of decrease	35%	38%

Appendix J

Grade Point Average for TASK Students

Student	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter (5 TASK Weeks Completed)
1	1.17	1.50
2	0.00	0.33
3	1.33	1.50
4	1.50	1.83
5	2.00	2.50
6	2.00	1.83
7	2.00	2.00
8	0.50	1.33
9	2.00	2.33
10	1.83	2.50
11	0.00	0.33
12	1 67	2.33
13	2.00	1.33
14	1.17	1.82
15	1.50	1.33
16	1.33	1.50
17	1.50	1.83
18	1.50	2.50
19	2.00	1.50
20	1.67	2.50
21	0.50	1.33
22	1.50	2.00
23	1.83	1.33
24	1.50	1.33
25	1.67	2.33
Average GPA	1.4268	1.7564

Appendix K
Student Questionnaire Results

1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Undecided
4=Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree

		1	2	3	4	5
1. I have made a lot of new friends this year.						
	before TASK	10	8	0	0	7
	after TASK	8	9	0	5	3
2. The rules and discipline consequences at school are usually fair.						
	before TASK	0	9	0	9	7
	after TASK	6	10	0	7	2
3. Nobody at home cares how I do in school.						
	before TASK	15	0	0	5	5
	after TASK	12	3	0	5	5
4. Some of my teachers try hard to make school interesting.						
	before TASK	2	12	3	6	2
	after TASK	7	16	0	2	0
5. I am planning to graduate from high school.						
	before TASK	20	2	1	2	0
	after TASK	22	0	0	3	0
6. Going to school is a waste of time.						
	before TASK	12	7	0	3	3
	after TASK	10	7	0	5	3
7. I like to go to school to see my friends.	before TASK	25	0	0	0	0
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0
8. My teachers really don't care about me.						
	before TASK	13	4	0	4	4
	after TASK	0	0	0	0	25
9. I like being part of a team.						
	before TASK	6	12	2	0	5
	after TASK	10	7	0	3	5

1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Undecided
4=Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree

		1	2	3	4	5
10. My teachers embarrass me and make me feel stupid.						
	before TASK	2	6	4	10	3
	after TASK	2	3	0	20	0
11. I always ask my friends for advice before I make a decision.						
	before TASK	6	8	1	8	2
	after TASK	2	3	0	12	8
12. My teachers are always picking on me.						
	before TASK	8	9	3	5	0
	after TASK	7	10	0	8	0
13. I will probably drop out of school before high school graduation.						
	before TASK	0	3	0	2	20
	after TASK	0	3	0	2	20
14. I wish my grades were better in school.						
	before TASK	20	3	0	2	0
	after TASK	20	3	2	0	0
15. I´m satisfied with things just the way they are.						
	before TASK	16	3	2	4	0
	after TASK	15	5	0	5	0

Appendix L
Teacher Questionnaire Results

1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Undecided
4=Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree

		1	2	3	4	5
1. I have very little influence on my student friend.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	2	12	7	4	0
2. My student friend will probably get into less trouble in school because of TASK.						
	before TASK	25	0	0	0	0
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0
3. I think I can make a difference in my student friend's life.						
	before TASK	25	0	0	0	0
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0
4. I genuinely care about my student friend.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0
5. I really consider my paired student a friend.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	15	0	0	0	10
6. Working with students outside the classroom requires special training.						
	before TASK	0	0	8	9	8
	after TASK	0	0	0	15	10
7. Students drop out of school because they feel unsuccessful.						
	before TASK	25	0	0	0	0
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0
8. If I can make my student friend feel better about himself, he will probably stay in school.						
	before TASK	13	4	0	4	4
	after TASK	10	7	0	4	4
9. I sincerely like being with my student friend, even though I am giving up my free time.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	10	10	0	5	0

1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Undecided
4=Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree

		1	2	3	4	5
10. Every teacher should be paired with a student.						
	before TASK	15	0	5	5	0
	after TASK	10	0	0	7	8
11. My student friend really does not belong in school.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	3	2	0	0	20
12. TASK takes up too much of my time.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0
13. I would like to continue working with my student friend even when program is over.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	19	0	0	0	6
14. I would rather work with another student.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	5	0	5	0	15
15. I think TASK is a worthwhile project and should be repeated.						
	before TASK	N/A				
	after TASK	25	0	0	0	0